

ASCETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MEDIATOR DEI

INTRODUCTION: The term "ascetical" taken in its broader meaning, as embracing the entire spiritual striving of the Christian.

- I. *Mediator's* definition of liturgy immediately makes clear the basic relation of liturgy and asceticism.
 - (a) Clear also from relation of *Mediator Dei* to the *Mystici Corporis*.
 - (b) Apparent especially in treatment of the Eucharist-Mass.
 - (c) Also of the Liturgical Year.
 - (d) Hence purpose of the "liturgical movement" (cf. Pius X).
- II. Perhaps greatest contribution of *Mediator Dei* is that it "personalizes" the sacraments.
 - (a) Not just "means of grace," but the saving activity of Christ.
 - (b) Cf. our definition of "sacraments."
 - (c) Cf. St. Thomas' treatment.
- III. Sacraments—the foundation of the life of virtue; *agere sequitur esse*; else we might as well be in the Old Testament.
 - (a) Basic is the "imitatio" of Christ's passion and resurrection *in signo*, especially in the Eucharist. (Cf. St. Cyril of Jerusalem.)
 - (b) Also in each of the other sacraments.
 - (c) Historical "separation"; danger of anthropocentrism in pressing the "sacramenta propter homines" axiom. E contra, cf. Ps. Denys.
 - (d) Advantages in practice: unity, wholeness.
- IV. Liturgy and personal effort.
 - (a) Principles laid down in *Mediator Dei's* treatment of relation of liturgy to private devotions.
 - (b) "Let everything therefore have its proper place and arrangement; let everything be 'theocentric' so to speak."

GODFREY DIEKMANN, O.S.B.,
Collegetown, Minn.